

TOWN OF STOW
Community Preservation Committee

Minutes, February 8, 2021, Amended

Community Preservation Committee Virtual Zoom Meeting

Community Preservation Committee members present: Vin Antil (Chair), Roger Zimmerman (Vice Chair), Bob Larkin, John Colonna-Romano, Barbara Clancy, Mike Busch, Ingeborg Clark, Erica Benedick

CPC Liaison: Cortni Frecha (Board of Selectman)

Presenters: Doug Hyde, Don Mills

Other Attendees (not a complete list): Kathy Sferra, Jim Salvie, Atli Thorarensen

Admin. Assistant: Krista Bracci

The meeting began with a quorum at 7:04 pm

Note: all CPC members introduced themselves as they voted on the January 25th minutes. Vin introduced Mike who was late to the meeting (arrived at 7:12 pm).

MINUTES

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the minutes of January 25, 2021 as amended, Erica seconded. A roll call was taken and the vote was 7 – 0 (Mike was not present).

Roger	Yes
Barbara	Yes
Ingeborg	Yes
Bob	Yes
John	Yes
Erica	Yes
Vin	Yes

INVOICES

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve an invoice from Mills Whitaker Architects (#CN229-01-2020-03) in the amount of \$22,245.69 (Town Hall), Roger seconded. A roll call was taken and the vote was unanimous (Mike was not present).

Roger	Yes
Barbara	Yes
Ingeborg	Yes
Bob	Yes
John	Yes
Erica	Yes
Vin	Yes

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve an invoice from W.B. Mason (217118823) in the amount of \$55.39 (Supply Admin Account), Ingeborg seconded. A roll call was taken and the vote was unanimous (Mike was not present).

Roger	Yes
Barbara	Yes
Ingeborg	Yes
Bob	Yes
John	Yes
Erica	Yes
Vin	Yes

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve an invoice from Krista Bracci (Amazon) in the amount of \$24.99 (other Admin Account), Erica seconded. A roll call was taken and the vote was unanimous (Mike was not present).

Roger	Yes
Barbara	Yes
Ingeborg	Yes
Bob	Yes
John	Yes
Erica	Yes
Vin	Yes

Mike arrived at the meeting – 7:12 pm

TOWN HALL RESTORATION COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Doug Hyde introduced Don Mills, the architect for the project and presenter. There is a copy of the presentation Don gave to the CPC in the project file. Cortni Frecha mentioned she provided Krista with a comparison spreadsheet. Krista will forward this to the CPC members after the meeting and place a copy in the file with the presentation.

Key points Don mentioned during his presentation:

- The Town Hall is eligible to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Being on this registry does have some advantages.
- The hay scale is a unique and nice addition to the 1848 building and should be preserved.
- A variance has been submitted.
- The purpose of the project is to restore the building's character and provide handicap access to the public.
- The exterior will be cleaned up by taking out the ramp and putting in a walkway.
- Right now, there are four ways into the building on the ground floor. They plan to make it much simpler with one way in (lobby area).
- They plan to add one toilet so that there is a total of three. That way more than a hundred people can be in the building at one time.
- A pantry, elevator and office will be added to the building.
- The balcony/fire escape is going to be removed and the stage in the great hall will be made wider.
- The L section of the building is the newer section. This section has a wall bulging and water has been found. It is wood framed and has no ventilation. They plan to remove this old frame and put down a slab with crushed stone and drainage.

What is being done now:

- A survey will be going out to the public for their input.

- Planning some public forums after the survey results are in.
- Meeting every two weeks to check in.
- Talking to neighbors to discuss a noise analysis.
- Reaching out to consultants about the interior work that will need to be done.
- Getting cost estimates for Town Meeting.
- Speaking with Stow TV and the Historical Commission about what their needs are.
- Obtaining four different HVAC cost estimates.

CPC questions that were asked:

- What is the plan for the great hall balcony?
The balcony right now is unsafe and only authorized personal are allowed up there. There is a low railing and limited head room. Many have stressed they want the balcony to remain since it has such a charm about it. Most likely the balcony will be staying and will have limited use.
- Will there be railing along the side walk due to the drop off?
A rail may be needed, but vegetation is going to be planted as well. Safety is a priority and code will be followed.
- What will happen to the window near the fire escape that is blocked?
It will be removed.
- What is the scope of the survey?
To see what the breath of use the town hall will most likely get. This way they can plan on things like how much and what type of lighting will be needed.
- Will there be a fire suppression system in the building?
There is no code requirement and the Fire Chief still needs to be contacted. This may be an add alternative at some point. A water source would be needed. With better insulation the building would burn much slower if a fire happens.
- What will happen to the alarm and the flag pole?
The alarm will be removed and no decision has been made about the flag pole at this time.
- How old is the \$3.5 estimate?
The estimate is about two years old. There may be a need to add or subtract items in different areas. Don does feel this number is workable.
- Will the building be energy efficient?
Yes, once insulation is put in and even better after the windows are replaced. The window could Be done later if cost is an issue.
- Has a plaque been discussed for outside of the building?
Nothing is planned or budgeted at the moment.
- Would new construction be cheaper than doing a restoration?
Don said in his opinion a restoration would be cheaper and should always be your first choice. The stud walls are in excellent condition.

Final Discussion:

Doug was wondering when the CPC will make their decision. He also was wondering if alternative funding may be needed. If yes, he may need to have time to go to the Town and change direction. Vin informed Doug that the CPC will make their decision at their next meeting (3/8/21) after they attend the Select Board meeting on February 23rd. He also mentioned that the CPC has been looking into bonding this project. He reminded Doug that a 2/3 vote was needed at Town Meeting. Doug informed the members that he feels like the CPA matching funds are like getting a grant from the State. Cortni mentioned that there are two Select Board members against bonding CPA projects. Bob felt that the CPC should stand by their policy of not funding a project 100%. Project applicants should have multiple funding sources.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS ERICA'S BONDING SPREADSHEETS

Erica informed the members that her husband helped with the spreadsheets. Krista also informed the members that a copy of these spreadsheets will be placed in the project file.

Vin's Recap:

Vin mentioned he liked the idea that the first few years the payments are lower to help with the bottle neck of projects expected and larger payments are a few years out. He would like to keep the annual payment to be less than \$300,000, otherwise we may be getting into a scenario of bonding projects every year.

Member/Liaison Comments:

- There are years when we have no projects at all and the balances will increase.
- This bond would be tiny compared to what the town bonds.
- We can always ask Brad the town Treasurer for more guidance.
- Before Stow had CPA the town bonded money for the purchase of Flagg Hill (approximately \$3 million over 3 years).
- The town could pick up some of the cost of the Town Hall Restoration.
- We need cash on hand for larger projects like Stow Acres that are expected over the next few years.
- If we bond only \$1.5 million then our monthly payment will be approximately \$167,000. This amount will give us the chance to support other projects.
- CPA bonding does not raise taxes.
- There is also another farm that may go up for sale at some point in the center of the town.
- It is most likely people would prefer to bond the town hall over Stow Acres.
- Would like to have Selectman approval on bonding a CPA project.
- It would be a good idea to have an organization called Friends of the Town Hall.

PREPERATION FOR THE BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING

The CPC agreed the purpose of the meeting is to strategize with the Select Board on how to handle the issue of having more project than money in the accounts. They would also like to know how they feel about the Town Hall Restoration project and CPA bonding some of the project cost. The CPC wants to retain 100% control of the decision to approve or not approve the project as well as if bonding will be obtained.

Select Board Presentation Specifics:

Vin will put the below listed points into paragraph form and present to the Select Board. Erica said she will be willing to speak as well. Other members will attend, but not speak. Krista will take the minutes for the CPC section of the meeting.

- The CPC does not have enough money to fund all three large project applications this year: Hallock Point, Stow Acres and The Town Hall.
- Account balances will be given and the board will need to know that \$3.5 will break the bank.
- The members prefer to have other funding sources and not be responsible for 100% of the cost.
- A significant amount of funds will be needed over the next few years for other large projects that are expected.
- CPC may be comfortable bonding more than \$1.5 million for the Town Hall if needed.

Action Items:

Vin will write up a paragraph and have Erica and Krista look it over. Krista will then send the paragraph to the Town Administrator to provide the selectman prior to the meeting on the 23rd.

PROJECT UPDATES

None were given.

NEWS & VIEWS

Nothing was mentioned.

MEETING SCHEDULE

February 23rd – CPC at BOS Meeting

March 8th

Bob made a motion to adjourn at 9:25 pm, Ingeborg seconded, and the vote was unanimous after a roll call was taken:

Roger	Yes
Barbara	Yes
Ingeborg	Yes
Bob	Yes
John	Yes
Erica	Yes
Mike	Yes
Vin	Yes

Respectfully submitted by: Krista Bracci